the present financial depression. To the cry of the people of the northern taluks for public works, 'want of funds' was generally urged as an answer. He advocated the desirability of raising loans for the construction of useful re-productive works, such as, the extension of the Railway. It was a well-known truth that all Governments, desiring the health and prosperity of their people, should afford every facility to make their village life healthy. Construction of public wells, improvement of public tanks and provision of easy means of communication were essential for the purpose, but very little was being done under those heads at present. The maintenance of the village roads by the Public Works Department was unsatisfactory. The Member therefore prayed that more funds should annually be allotted to meet those requirements of the mofussil villages, and that a portion of the allotment for each taluk should be entrusted to the Town Improvement Committees for the maintenance of the roads in the town.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

4. Curtailment of administrative expenditure.

Mr. S. Subrahmanya Pillai (Member, Trading Classes, Nagercoil) said that the expenditure had far exceeded the revenue, and that it was high time, therefore, to adopt measures for curtailing the former to place the finances of the State on a sound footing, as there was no possibility of increasing the revenue from the already over-burdened tax-payer. He was of opinion that the importation of foreigners to high-paid offices was a source of hardship to the natives and of loss to Government, as most of the offices could be profitably filled by the able sons of the soil on a less pay. He next referred to the Public Works Department and said that the number and pay of the officers of the higher grades were far above the requirements. The staff for the Trivandrum Division was prodigious. The present system of giving works on contract was fraught with evils resulting in loss of money to the State. Works were constructed and demolished for technical faults, without the officer responsible being rendered liable for the loss. He also referred to the large expenditure on travellers' bungalows without a corresponding income. In the Police Department, the officers of the higher ranks were too many and large savings could be effected by curtailing their pay and that of the establishment. In the Education Department, the pay of the higher officers, such as the Professors, Assistant Professors, Tutors and Headmasters of Higher Grade Secondary Schools, was too much and their number was capable of reduction. The pay of the District Magistrate, he thought, need not be more than that of a District Judge. He complained against the importation of medicines from Europe at a great cost while there were so many medicinal plants in India, from which almost all the medicines required could be extracted, and also against the award of grants to some of the private medical institutions, such as the L. M. S. Hospital and the Salvation Army Hospital. He advocated the desirability of reducing the rates of pension to high-paid officials.

He next referred to the hardships of the people of the town of Nagercoil, owing to taxation by the Town Improvement Committee, and complained against the practice now followed of issuing demand notices before the tax was demanded. He complained also against the action of the Tahsildars in removing encroachments and prayed that an appeal might be allowed to the Peishkars against their decisions, instead of to the Government direct.

Mr. V. Kunjukrishna Pillai (Member, T. I. C., Attungal) said that the cost of administration in Travancore did not bear a reasonable proportion to the amount spent on public service. The Government had to curtail the expenditure under the latter head during 1091 for want of funds. He therefore proposed certain measures for reducing the cost of administration so that the allotments for public service might not suffer. Taking the Land Revenue Department, the Member thought that it was necessary to adequately strengthen the staff and to amalgamate the Registration and Survey Departments with it. The preliminary work in connection with the registration of documents might be entrusted to the village officers who would be able to

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better identify the parties and the properties. The documents should then be sent to the taluk office for registration. Each Taluk Sub-Registrar might be given the status of an Assistant Tahsildar, whose services could also be utilized as the custodian of the improved, perfected, central Taluk Records including the civil, magisterial, taluk, police and public works records. The Divisional District Registrar, having the status of a Tahsildar, might be the Land Records Superintendent as well for the Division. The professional qualification in the Survey Superintendent might be insisted on in the Land Revenue Secretary in the Huzur, the statutory work of the Director of Registration being vested in the Judicial Secretary or the Head Sirkar Vakil. The strengthened land revenue staff could very well take up the collection of revenue from the excise proper and from the forests outside the reserves, and the policy of the Government in their department of separate revenue should be controlled by the Secretary in charge, who might be styled Commissioner of Separate Revenue and who might also be the head of the subordinate departments of customs, marine and forests.

Dewan.—Would it be possible to procure an officer who has ample knowledge of the working of all these departments ?

The Member said that it would be enough if Assistant Commissioners possessing technical knowledge were appointed in the Excise and Forest Departments. The cost of administration of the forests was more than 70% of the receipts therefrom and only a negligible fraction of it was spent on forest conservation. The major portion of the expenditure was on account of the removal of timber from the forests by Government agency. He pointed out that the removal of timber under the permit system on payment of seigniorage value was decidedly profitable to Government. He argued that the Free Pass Rules were illegal as they restricted individual rights of property vested in the owner by law, and quoted the decision of the High Court in A. S. No. 86 of 1089 in support of his contention. But it was not possible for the ordinary man to procure the decisions of courts in each case when they were restrained by the Forest Department from removing timber, etc., from their own registered holdings. He proposed that the timber depots be handed over to the Land Revenue Department and the Forest Department deprived of all control over the plains, the preventive work of the department in the plains being handed over to the Police. He prayed for an enquiry into the working of the Forest Department. If the work of collection of revenue from excise proper be entrusted to the Land Revenue Department, as proposed, the staff of the Excise Department might be considerably reduced. Coming to the Police Department, he said that the offender should be separated from the criminal and that the Police officers should not conduct what were Bench Magistracy cases elsewhere. The sessions cases should be conducted by the Prosecuting Inspectors who were graduates-in-law, under instructions from the Commissioner of Police, who could also be the Director of Criminal Prosecutions. The number of Sirkar Vakils could then be reduced. Further, if all the suits in which Government participated were transferred to the Trivandrum District Court, the conduct of such suits could be watched by the Government and the Head Sirkar Vakil and the Sirkar Vakils outside Trivandrum might be done away with. The Head Sirkar Vakil could be the Judicial Secretary as well. In the Medical Department, the cost on account of officers was about 3½ lakhs of rupees while the cost of medicine was only half a lakh. In spite of so many officers, very few among them investigated the causes of the prevalence of certain diseases peculiar to Travancore. He proposed to have one Medical and Sanitary officer in charge of a dispensary at the headquarters of each taluk, and three hospitals for research work, chronic diseases and special treatment. Rural sanitation might be attended to by the village staff under taluk control. He considered that there was over-staffing in the Public Works and Education Departments.

In conclusion, the Member prayed that his scheme, which was expected to bring about a saving of forty lakhs of rupees annually, might be considered in full by a committee consisting of experienced officers of the State.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

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